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ABSTRACT

This report describes instructional strategies that will improve the revising and editing skills of sixth grade students during the writing process. The literature review suggested improved instruction and evaluation through a writer's workshop approach, which would include a positive environment, mini-lessons, teacher modeling, peer editing, and student/teacher conferencing. This researcher focused specifically on peer editing and student/teacher conferencing. A survey was administered to all language arts teachers at the site during the last week of August. Also during this week, students were given a survey to fill out regarding their attitude toward writing. After drafting a writing sample the first week of September, students were evaluated with two rubrics by the researcher. During the first week of December, an identical survey was given to the students, and a second writing sample was evaluated according to the same rubrics. Post intervention data indicated an increase in student achievement. Improvement was shown in all areas of content and mechanics. In addition, attitude data showed an increase in the understanding of the revising and editing phases of the writing process. After the four-month study, students showed growth in understanding the process of writing, and spent more time on the revising and editing phases. This increased time resulted in overall improvement of their written work. (Contains 32 references and 21 figures. Three appendixes contain the following: the teacher and student surveys; Narrative Writing Rubric; Mechanics Writing Rubric; the baseline writing prompt and post writing prompt; lesson plans; a peer editing guide; and a conferencing checklist.) (PM)

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ED 465 189

IMPROVING STUDENT REVISING AND EDITING SKILLS THROUGH THE USE OF PEER EDITING AND WRITING CONFERENCING

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ABSTRACT

This report describes instructional strategies that will improve the revising and editing skills of students during the writing process. The targeted population consisted of sixth grade middle school students in a middle class suburban community, located in a midwestern state. The problems of revision were documented through data consisting of student and teacher surveys, and rubrics.

Literature review suggested improved instruction and evaluation through a writer's workshop approach as a possible solution to the problem of poor revision skills. Within this structure, research also points to creating a positive environment, beginning the workshop with mini-lessons, teacher modeling, peer editing and student/teacher conferencing as possible solutions. This researcher focused specifically on peer editing and student/teacher conferencing.

A survey will be administered to all language arts teachers at the site during the last week of August. Also during this week, students will be given a survey to fill out regarding their attitude toward writing. This survey will be given again to reassess their attitudes toward writing the first week of December. After drafting a writing sample the first week of September, students will be evaluated with two rubrics by the researcher. The same rubrics will again be used to evaluate another writing sample during the first week of December.

Post intervention data indicated an increase in student achievement through the use of teacher/student conferencing and peer editing. Improvement was shown in all areas of content including the following: focus, clarity, organization, support, and imagery. Each of the following areas of mechanics also showed improvement: grammar, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and sentence structure.

In addition, attitude data showed an increase in the understanding of the revising and editing phases of the writing process. After the four-month study, students showed growth in understanding the process of writing, and spent more time on the revising and editing phases. This increased time resulted in overall improvement of their written work.

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CHAPTER I

PROBLEM STATEMENT AND CONTEXT

General Statement of the Problem

Ineffective writing instruction has caused the students of the targeted sixth grade class to exhibit difficulty in revising their own work, thus impeding their growth as writers. Evidence for the existence of the problem includes teacher formal assessments, and surveys of students and fellow teachers.

Immediate Problem Context

This study will be conducted at a site located in a midwestern city approximately 35 miles from a large city. The original section of this site was shaped as a pod, and opened in 1968. A year later, a second pod was added to the original. At this time, the site housed students in kindergarten through fourth grade. In 1973 a major addition was opened, adding a learning center, a gym, an office area, science labs, a home economics area, an art room, and a lunchroom to the two pods. By 1974 the entire district's sixth, seventh and eighth grade students were housed in the building. Six classrooms and a new lunchroom were added in 1980. In 1986 a referendum was passed for a new junior high school, which opened in 1988. As a result, this site became a fifth and sixth grade building. A second gymnasium and 16 classrooms were added in

1991. Seven years later, the community approved a bond referendum to build a new school and renovate existing schools in the district. By 1999 the site housed fifth, sixth and seventh grades, and in 2000 the site housed half of the district's sixth, seventh and eighth grade students. When this transition occurred, the site became a middle school.

This site is a one-story brick building, and is located in a residential area with a public library and public park fewer than two blocks away. The school is located approximately one mile from the city hall. Nearly 44% of students walk to school, and 56% of students ride buses. School hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 2:45 p.m.

The school has an enrollment of 997 students. The ethnic/racial breakdown is as follows: 76.2% White, 4.2% Black, 6.9% Hispanic, and 12.6% Asian/Pacific Islander. The percentage of low-income students is 2.1%, and 4.7% of the student population are limited-English-proficient. There are 14 reported chronic truants, with the school's chronic truancy rate at 0.3%. Average daily attendance is 95.9%, and the school's mobility rate is 8.2% (2000 School Report Card).

The site where this study took place has an average class size of 26.8 students. It houses one computer lab with 30 computers, and a learning center with 10 additional computers. Each classroom has two computers, and every two classrooms have a presentation television, and a television with a videocassette recorder. All computers are networked, thus providing Internet access. Separate from the computer lab is a technology lab that holds another 15 computers, a home economics lab that houses 15 computers, and a piano lab housing 30 keyboards.

Students' schedules vary somewhat from sixth to seventh and eighth grades. A sixth grade student typically has mathematics, science, social studies, reading, language arts and

physical education every day. Every six weeks, the students rotate to a different related arts class: Junior Great Books, technology, home life, health, and art. During their rotation, students attend each class for a forty-five minute period. Gifted education services are provided for all grade levels, and include programs in the curricular areas of mathematics and language arts.

Extra-curricular activities are offered at this site. The athletic opportunities include basketball, volleyball, cheerleading, wrestling, cross-country and track. Musical opportunities include band, chorus and a spring musical. Individual band lessons are given throughout the school day. This site also sponsors clubs which meet before or after school. Included in the choices are chess club, newspaper club, science club and floor hockey club. In addition, the site offers a before and after school program for students with working parents. Students may arrive as early as 7:00 a.m., and may stay as late as 6:00 p.m.

Staffing at this site is comprised of one principal, two assistant principals, 42 regular education teachers, six special education teachers and three secretaries. There are two social workers, one school psychologist, one speech therapist and eight aides that work with special education teachers and in the learning center. The ethnic/racial background of the site staff is as follows: 98.1% White, 1.1% Black, 0.6% Hispanic and 0.2% Asian/Pacific Islander. There are 21% male teachers in this building, and 79% female teachers. Approximately 50.8% of the teachers have a master's degree, and the average salary is $40, 285. The average administrator's salary is $79,888.

The district is made up of six elementary schools and two middle schools. There are a total of 17 administrators in these schools, and the average administrative salary is $82,938. The superintendent's salary is $100,000. This district has an instructional expenditure per pupil of

$3,123 and an operating expenditure per pupil of $5,369. For the 1998-99 school year, expenditure by fund was as follows: education $21,105,207, operations and maintenance $2,798,725, transportation $1,541,671, bond and interest $2,520,324, municipal retirement/social security $558,506, and site and construction/capital improvement $6, 046,750 (2000 School Report Card).

The Surrounding Community

Located approximately 35 miles from a large city, this community was founded in 1959, and now has a population of 39,100. The following percentages show the racial/ethnic breakdown of the community: White 88.5%, Black 3.8%, American Indian, Eskimo or Aleut 0.2%, Asian or Pacific Islander 7.8%, Hispanic 6.6% and Other 0.3%. More than 540 businesses and industries are located in this community. The average household income is $72,723 and the average single-family detached home selling price is $159,052.

Police in this community offer programs for students including Violence Education and Gang Awareness, and Drug Awareness and Resistance Education. The Park District offers recreational activities for all ages. Students enjoy several parks in the community, and are offered programs such as soccer, baseball, football, and cheerleading. A fitness center houses a large gymnasium, nursery, teen center, batting cages, classrooms, stage, dance room, meeting rooms and a kitchen. During the summer months, residents may use the Aquatic Park which features a zero depth pool, lap lanes, tiny tot pool, hot tub, water slides, sand volleyball, playground area and a full-service concession stand. The village has one library containing a 100,614-volume collection and meeting rooms available for use by the community. This library

provides programs for students throughout the school year and during the summer months (www.villageprofile.com).

National Context of the Problem

Concern about writing and editing at the middle school level has been observed at national level. One of the major problems noted is that student writing and editing are often ineffective because of the way writing is taught in the classroom. According to Wilcox (1997), teachers often do too much editing for their students. They need to be better at guiding students with editing, and not editing for them. Teachers need to be better at focusing on the writing process, and not the final product. Lillios and Iding (1996) suggest that teachers often think that the more red ink they use, the better the final product will be. In contrast, Wilcox (1997) also suggests that teachers may be guilty of doing too little for students in the editing process. Teachers do not always provide enough helpful, specific suggestions for guiding students to improve their writing. It has also been noted that this process writing approach has not been used as widely or successfully in the higher grades. Junior high schools are often departmentalized, and the process approach is more difficult to implement, often due to time constraints. The volume and complexity of work in junior high school settings present challenges for teachers, not the least of which is budgeting time (Zemelman & Daniels, 1988). Because of this, junior high school teachers often rely on the English department alone to focus on writing skills. In departmentalized settings, English teachers do not have the time to focus on the writing process as a whole because they do not see students in large enough amounts of time.

Another reason students struggle with writing and revising is that teachers do not allow them to write about topics that interest them personally. Writing too often focuses on academic

elements, not allowing students to personalize and take ownership for their work. Zemelman and Daniels (1987) suggest that writing has been taught so badly in schools that students have become compelled to waste their writing on trivial purposes, which often stunt their urge to write. Writing for such purposes will not make the writing meaningful for students. Calkins (1986) suggests that teachers often use activities to stimulate writing, but these activities often do not help students become deeply and personally involved in their writing. She states, "In most American classrooms, the teacher's focus is not on the child, but on a unit of study, the textbook, the pre-packaged curriculum. Children, however, have their own agendas, and the two agendas are often miles apart" (1986, p.6).

This lack of personalization in writing leads to a lack of motivation on the part of students, especially in the years following elementary school. According to Zemelman and Daniels (1988), students in sixth grade and beyond show more resistance to writing and a lack of pride in their work, and fail to reveal any genuine purpose for their work. In addition, they often refuse to look back and revise what they have written. One reason for this could be that while elementary grades call for more personal writing, junior high schools often call for more formal and expository forms of writing, a genre that may be less appealing and motivating to this population of students. Research such as Zemelman and Daniels' study of junior high students (1988) shows that when writing has no personal significance for students, they will not want to write, showing a lack of motivation. Many students of this junior high age have become jaded and bored, resulting in slow growth as writers and editors and attitude problems. Psychosocial issues also contribute to students' lack of motivation to write. Adolescents are often fearful of exposing themselves in their writing, sharing their thoughts and feelings, or making themselves

vulnerable to the their peers or adults. This fear could result in an absence of effort and depth in their written work (Zemelman & Daniels, 1988).

Further evidence of ineffective instruction is shown when teachers focus more on the products of written work rather than the process of writing itself. As a result, students themselves lack skills in understanding the process. For example, students often want to skip the planning and organizing stage of the writing process (Black, 1998). Students frequently want to begin writing immediately after the teacher has given her directions, thus giving little thought to their piece before beginning. The drafting stage is often stopped too soon, before students really access what they know, which then generates little content. According to Graham (1999), such little planning will result in little elaboration and detail, and often exclude, or not fully develop, critical elements such as an ending or a setting.

In addition, research shows that teachers do not spend enough time teaching students how to revise their work. Calkins states, "Many of our students know their pieces of writing are far from ideal, but they may not know how to make their actual texts more like their ideal ones" (1986, p. 14). Similarly, Donald Graves feels that most children see little sense in revision, especially without help (1987). It seems that students often have difficulty coordinating the many different skills involved in revising and editing. When asked to revise, students primarily focus on making the paper neater and correcting spelling errors only. Graves (1987, p. 15) states that, "When children are told to revise their work, it often leads to some extra commas, a few spelling changes, and erasing black smudges in the margin." Peers are sometimes involved in the editing process, but often do not know how to evaluate bad writing from good writing, once

again showing the difficulty students have in knowing how to edit, and the lack of direction they have been given by teachers for how to do so (Gorman, 1998).

In conclusion, national research has shown a strong link between ineffective instruction by teachers in the classroom and poor revising skills of students. Instructors are not spending enough time teaching the skills of writing, such as how to revise and edit. They also put too much focus on the written product rather than guiding them through and giving them an understanding of the process of writing. Finally, teachers rarely allow students to personalize their work. As a result, students are often unmotivated to write, especially at levels beyond elementary school.

CHAPTER 2

PROBLEM DOCUMENTATION

Problem Evidence

In order to document the extent of poor student revising and editing skills, a teacher survey on the writing process and student revising skills was distributed. In addition, a student attitude survey was administered regarding the phases of the writing process. Finally, a baseline narrative writing prompt was administered to obtain samples of student writing; these writing samples were evaluated with a content rubric and a mechanics rubric. The teacher-researcher designed all instruments. All instruments were designed based on State Standards for teaching language arts.

During the last week of August, the first instrument providing problem evidence was administered in the form of a teacher survey on student writing skills. Twenty-three language arts teachers were surveyed at the building site and 15 teachers returned the survey. The teacher survey (Appendix A) results are compiled in Figures 1 and 2. Figure 1 represents the phases of the writing process that language arts teachers believe are the most challenging for students and Figure 2 shows the teachers' opinions of student revising and editing skills. In Figure 2, teachers evaluated student revising and editing skills as "usually accurate" or "rarely or never accurate."

Teacher responses were combined into five categories: a) capitalization and punctuation, b) spelling, c) support and imagery, d) focus and clarity, and e) organization.

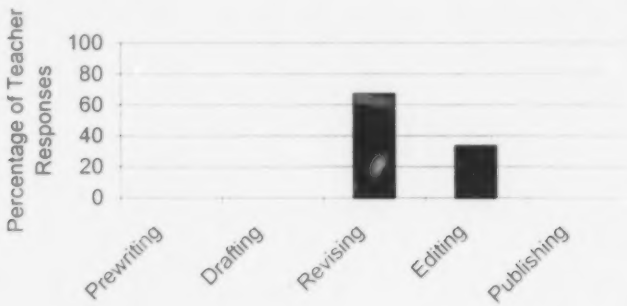

Figure 1. Teacher survey showing the phase of the writing process that gives students the most trouble.

Figure 1 shows the results of the teacher survey showing the phase of the writing process that is the most challenging for students. There were no teachers who felt students have the most difficulty with prewriting, drafting or publishing. Sixty-seven percent, however, believed that revision was the most difficult phase for students. Thirty-three percent stated the editing phase as the most difficult.

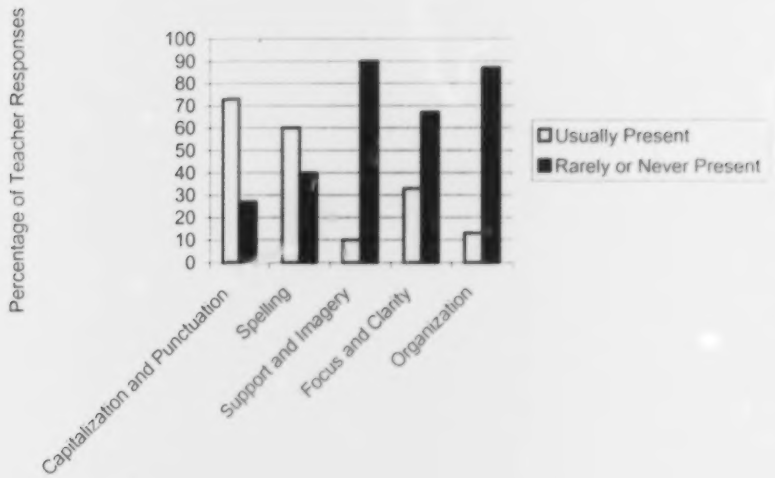

Figure2. Teacher survey of student writing skill levels in mechanics and content.

Figure 2 shows the results of the teacher survey on student writing skill levels in mechanics and content. Regarding capitalization and punctuation, teachers stated that 73% of students are usually accurate, and 27% are rarely or never accurate. Sixty percent of teachers feel students are usually accurate with spelling, and 40% believe students are rarely or never accurate. In the area of support and imagery, 10% of teachers believe students are usually accurate, while 90% believe students are rarely or never accurate. Thirty-three percent of teachers believe students are usually accurate in the area of focus and clarity in their writing, and 67% feel students are rarely or never accurate. For organization in writing, 13% of teachers state that students are usually accurate, while 87% are rarely or never accurate.

In summary, the first instrument showed that 100% of teachers at the building site believe that revising and editing are the most difficult phases of the writing process for students. An

average of 81% of teachers feel that students are rarely or never accurate in the areas of support and imagery, focus and clarity, and organization.

The second instrument, a student attitude survey (Appendix A), was administered by the teacher-researcher to 50 sixth grade students during the first week of September. The student survey contained six questions. The answers to three specific survey questions were compiled in Figures 3, 4, and 5. The first question asked students to indicate on which phase of the writing process they spend the most time; the data were compiled in Figure 3. In Figures 4 and 5 students believe the phase of the writing process that is the most challenging and the phase that is the easiest for them.

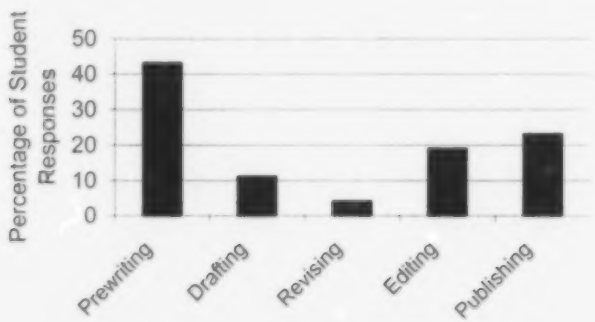

Figure 3. Student attitude survey responses to the phase of the writing process on which students spend the most time.

Figure 3 shows the results of the student attitude survey on the writing process in which students spend the most time. Forty-three percent of the students believe that they spend the most time on prewriting. Only 11% of students state that they spend the most time on drafting,

while 4% state revision. Nineteen percent of students feel they spend the most time on editing, and 23% state that they spend the most time on publishing in the total writing process.

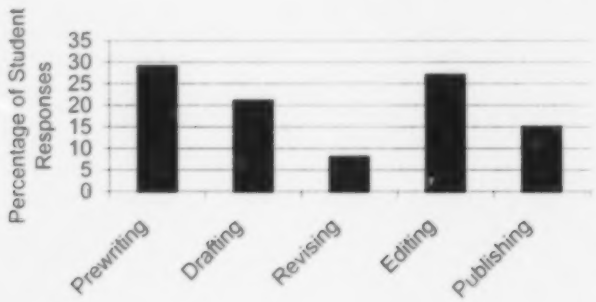

Figure 4. Student attitude survey responses to the phase of the writing process that is the easiest for them.

Figure 4 shows the results of the student attitude survey on the writing process that is the easiest for students. In the survey, 29% of students believe prewriting to be the easiest phase, while 21% feel drafting is easiest. Eight percent of students state that revision is the easiest, 27% believe editing is the easiest, and 15% stated publishing is the easiest.

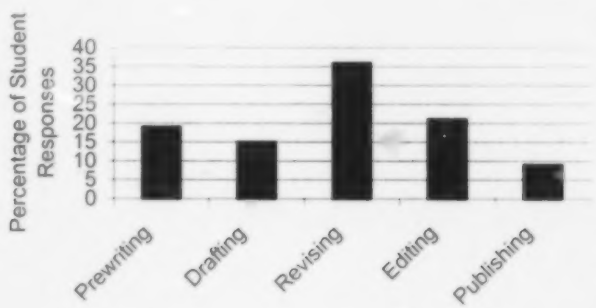

Figure 5. Student responses to the phase of the writing process that gives them the most trouble.

Figure 5 shows the results of the student attitude survey on the writing process phase that causes students the most trouble. Nineteen percent of the students feel prewriting is the most challenging, while 15% feel drafting is the most difficult. Thirty-six percent of the students feel that revision is the most difficult phase of the writing process. The editing phase is the most difficult for 21% of the students, and 9% believe publishing is the most challenging phase.

In conclusion, the student attitude survey showed that 65% of the students feel prewriting, drafting, or publishing are the easiest phases. Only 35% of the students feel revising and editing are the easiest phases of the writing process, while 56% of students state on the attitude survey that revising and editing are the most difficult. Despite the fact that many students feel revising and editing are the most challenging, only 23% of students state that they spend the most time on these phases.

During the first week of September, the teacher-researcher administered the third instrument, a narrative writing prompt (Appendix A) to 50 sixth grade students. The narrative writing prompt asked students to describe an unforgettable field trip or vacation. The completed writing samples were used to establish baseline data on student revising skills. The students' narrative writing samples were evaluated with two rubrics, a content rubric and a mechanics rubric. The revision skills evaluated in both rubrics were taken from the district's sixth grade language arts curriculum, which aligns with state language arts standards.

The content rubric for narrative writing (Appendix A) measures five aspects of revision: a) focus, b) clarity, c) organization, d) support, and e) imagery. These five areas were evaluated

with a four-point rubric; four points represent student mastery of the skill and three or fewer points indicate that the skill is not mastered.

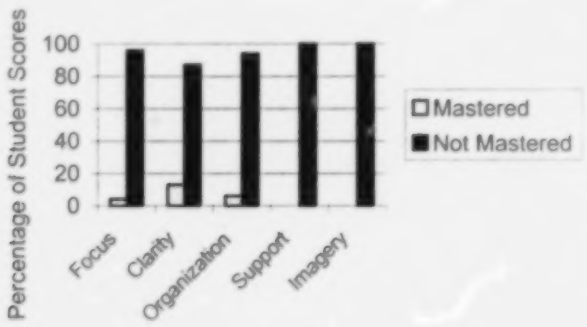

Figure 6. Results of the pre writing rubric showing student content writing skills.

Figure 6 shows the results of the rubric from the students' narrative writing sample regarding content. When examining content, 96% of the students did not master the use of focus and only 4% demonstrated mastery. Eighty-seven percent of students did not master clarity in their writing, while 13% demonstrated mastery. Ninety-four percent of students did not show mastery while 6% demonstrated mastery. There were no students who demonstrated mastery when using support and imagery in their writing. An average of 95% of the students did not show mastery in all five content categories: a) focus, b) clarity, c) organization, d) support, and e) imagery. One hundred percent of students did not demonstrate mastery in providing support and using imagery in the writing sample.

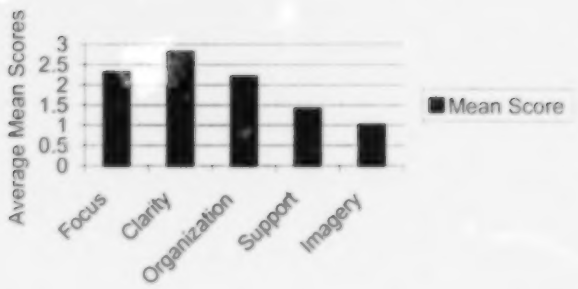

Figure 7. Results of the pre writing rubric showing mean scores of student writing skills in the area of content.

Figure 7 shows the average mean score in the September writing sample in the content areas including focus, clarity, organization, support and imagery. The maximum score in each category is 4.0. In the area of focus, students showed an average mean score of 2.3, while the area of clarity showed a mean score of 2.8. The mean score for organization was 2.2, and the mean score for support was 1.4. In the area of imagery, students showed an average score of 1.0 out of 4.0.

The mechanics rubric for narrative writing (Appendix A) measures revision and editing skills in five general categories: a) grammar, b) spelling, c) punctuation, d) capitalization, and e) sentence structure. Each skill category was evaluated based on a four-point rubric; four points represent student mastery of the skill and three or fewer points indicate that the skill is not mastered.

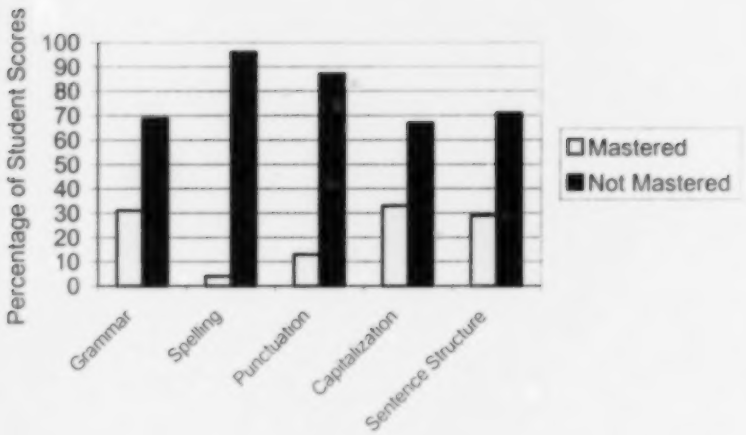

Figure 8. Results of the pre writing rubric showing student skills in mechanics.

Figure 8 shows the results of the mechanics rubric from the students' narrative writing sample. When using mechanics, 69% of the students did not demonstrate mastery in the area of grammar and 31% demonstrated mastery. Ninety-six percent of students did not demonstrate mastery in spelling, while 4% demonstrated mastery. When using punctuation, 87% of students did not demonstrate mastery and only 13% demonstrated mastery. In the area of capitalization, and 67% of students did not show mastery while 13% demonstrated mastery. Finally, 71% did not demonstrate mastery of sentence structure, while 29% demonstrated mastery.

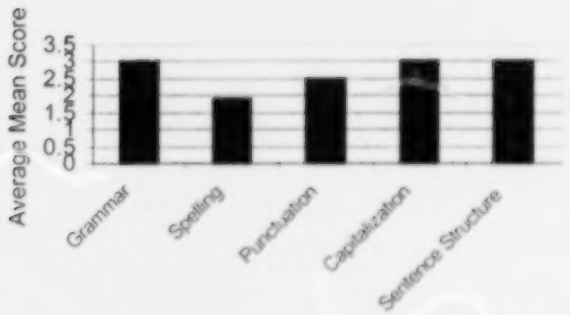

Figure 9. Results of the pre writing rubric showing mean scores of student writing skills in the area of mechanics.

Figure 9 shows the average mean score in the September writing sample in the mechanics areas including grammar, spelling, punctuation, capitalization and sentence structure. The maximum score in each category is 4.0. In the area of grammar, students showed an average mean score of 3.0, while the area of spelling showed a mean score of 1.9. The mean score for punctuation was 2.5, and the mean scores for capitalization and sentence structure were 3.0.

When examining all five areas of mechanics, an average of 78% of students did not demonstrate mastery in mechanics skills, and only 22% demonstrated mastery. Based on the narrative writing sample, the majority of students have poor skills in grammar, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and sentence structure.

In summary, the majority of students scored poorly on their writing sample in both content and mechanics. Only 5% showed mastery in the five areas of content. Likewise, students scored poorly in the area of mechanics, with only 22% showing mastery. Overall, more

than three-fourths of students' writing demonstrated great difficulty in both areas of content and mechanics.

Probable Causes

Literature suggests many underlying causes for the weaknesses in student revising skills, such as ineffective instruction of teachers, ineffective evaluation conducted by teachers, and the climate created in many classrooms. These three problems, however, are a result of a larger problem, which is that teachers are given very little training on how to give writing instruction.

Lack of teacher training is a problem noted by several researchers. According to Wiener (1990, p.8), "The astounding reality is that few teachers in grade school, junior high, senior high, or even college have had any training in how to teach composition." Colleges tend to spend more time and effort preparing teachers with courses in math, science and reading, but not writing. Researchers such as Zemelman and Daniels (1988) believe that the fundamental ideas and practices of teacher training need to be addressed and even challenged. Colleges most often train teachers in areas of content and focus on specific subject areas that teachers might eventually be called upon to teach. Zemelman and Daniels disagree with this approach, and state, "We think pedagogy is one of the critical weaknesses of the educational system and needs to be radically improved. We feel that the process by which learning is organized and presented is of transcendent importance to the outcomes of schooling" (1988, p. 12). Research shows that engaging students in the process of writing, for example, is of greater value than just telling students the rules for writing well (Brookens, 2000; Calkins, 1986; Zemelman and Daniels, 1988).

Literature also suggests that the lack of training for teachers in the area of writing has led to poor instructional methods and practices in the classroom. This is evident when exploring the area of the writing process. Students do not seem to understand the process of writing. Perhaps the reason for this is that teachers have not spent enough time explaining and modeling the process for them. Teachers often assign writing work, and then evaluate it without focusing on the process that students go through to accomplish their work. This is a result of teachers focusing too much on product rather than process (Brookens, 2000).

Literature suggests that not enough time is devoted to the phases of the writing process. Many teachers allow the planning and drafting stages to end too soon. Calkins (1996) believes that teachers should encourage students to spend more time working on the actual development of their stories or ideas, therefore spending much more time on the prewriting and drafting stages of the writing process. When little time is devoted to these stages, details are neglected, and writing lacks depth. Muschla (1993) claims that teachers do not do a very good job of helping students with the prewriting stage of the process because sorting through one's thoughts and organizing ideas are very difficult to teach. It, therefore, is often not taught.

Poor instruction also becomes evident as research shows that much of the time students do not know how to revise or edit their own written work. Teachers are not spending enough time on these stages of the writing process. Students often misinterpret the meaning of revision, and take it to mean making their paper neater (Gorman, 1998; Willis, 1997), or even define revision as proofreading (Graham & Harris, 1999). Not having been offered a good explanation of the meaning and purpose of revision by teachers, students do not always take this

phase of the writing process seriously. They believe that their written piece is finished after the first time it is drafted, and see little need for revision (Calkins, 1986; Graves, 1982). According to Zemelman and Daniels (1988, p. 171), "Many students have learned to hate revision simply because of what it has always meant and felt like in school." They feel that students are not being taught why they need to revise and edit; therefore, students do not have sufficient ownership in their writing to want to edit. Literature also shows that teachers spend little time teaching students editing skills. Because of this, common mistakes occur when students edit, such as reading words on their paper that are not really there even though their minds think they are there (May, 1997; Wiener, 1990).

Research also shows motivation to be a problem for students when writing and revising. Black and Wilcox (1998, p.1) suggest that young writers actually "cringe" when they are asked to revise. Likewise, Calkins (1996, p.13) states, "We can look at the resistance in our students' faces and clenched hands and know it is there not because writing is inherently a dreaded activity, but because writing has been taught in ways that make it so." Teachers contribute to this problem in several ways. For example, students are rarely allowed to write about topics that interest them. Instead, they are forced to write about curriculum-focused topics, or contrived topics that hold no personalization for them (Calkins, 1996; Gorman, 1998; Zemelman & Daniels, 1988). Likewise, Calkins (1996, p. 18) states:

> We focus so intently on the curriculum that when a child finds a moth fluttering inside the desk, we view the ripples of energy it produces in a classroom as interference. We continue with our curriculum, and the classroom settles back, into emotional flatness.

What this suggests is that students are not allowed to write about what is alive and real for them. Nancie Atwell (1987) admits that early in her teaching of writing, she assigned her own topics for her students because she believed that her structure was necessary for students to write well. She states (Atwell, p. 6), "I believed that my ideas were more credible and important than any my kids might possibly entertain." Research suggests that many teachers are still doing this, afraid to let their students take ownership for their own writing topics. Likewise, Frank (1995, p.23) believes, "They must be able to connect their writing to their real lives, real concerns, real feelings." When teachers do not allow students to write about what interests them, they feel that they lose their voice, and their motivation to write and revise decreases (Calkins, 1986; Frank, 1995). In addition, students may lose their motivation to write when they feel they are not writing for true audiences (Marchisan & Alber, 2001; Zemelman & Daniels, 1988). Teachers do not often enough provide students with the opportunities to write for legitimate readers other than fellow classmates or the teacher alone.

Teachers who lack proper training in understanding their students' needs may also contribute to this problem of student motivation noted by researchers. For example, literature suggests that teachers of higher grades do not always understand the needs of adolescents and are unaware of how to motivate them. Students of this age are often afraid to share and expose their work (Calkins, 1996; Zemelman & Daniels, 1988). They often lack self-worth, and feel they have nothing to write about (Muschla, 1993). Atwell (1987, p. 6) admits to assigning topics for her students because she thought, "Kids were so intimidated by expressing themselves on

paper they wouldn't write without a prompt." According to Zemelman and Daniels (1988), students of adolescent age feel that school has lost its newness, and this feeling slows their growth and can lead to attitude problems. A problem that results from these poor attitudes is that teachers do not often deal with students' resistance to writing, and so the teachers themselves resist teaching writing (Calkins, 1986).

Literature also suggests that the teaching of grammar has been poorly done in many classrooms, which may contribute to the struggle students have with revision. Grammar is too often taught in isolation, and many researchers believe this can even hinder students' growth as writers. Numerous studies have proven that drills taught in isolation do not carry over into students' writing (Byron, 1998; Calkins, 1986; Hyland, 2000; Willis, 1997; Zemelman & Daniels, 1988). Teaching grammar in context, as opposed to isolation, would be a significant change for many teachers. According to Gorman (1998) and Fiderer (1993), change is very difficult for teachers, and they are often unwilling to break old patterns.

Research has also shown that teachers often use poor questioning techniques, and these can lead to writing that lacks depth. For example, Wiener (1990) claims that too often teachers only ask questions that require a yes or no answer. When questions are asked that only require a one-word answer, detail will not be given to help support the answer. He believes that teachers do not often enough stress that students respond with complete thoughts, and therefore teachers do not see complete thoughts in their students' writing.

In addition to poor instruction, research suggests that teachers are weak at evaluating student writing. For example, teachers often edit too much for students, or try to tackle too many

problems at once (Muschla, 1993). When this happens, feedback is not meaningful. Too often, teachers' comments are not as specific as they should be and do not request additional information often enough to guide students to elaborate. Teachers should not be afraid to make some specific suggestions for improving students' papers. According to Wilcox (1997, p. 3), "Without such feedback, students will just begin to feel like they are involved only in an elaborate self-analysis and that they are not getting any help beyond that." Another problem that arises with evaluation is that teachers do not always make their writing expectations clear to students before they begin their work. According to Burke (1999, p. 84), the standard procedure for teachers should be that, "Each of the evaluative criteria on which a student's performance is to be judged is clearly explicated in advance of judging the quality of the student's performance." When this is not done, students are unaware of the teacher's expectations. Finally, research suggests that sometimes teachers do not provide suggestions at all, which leaves students adrift without any guidance to improve their own writing (Lillios & Iding, 1996).

Literature has also shown that the environment teachers create can also lead to poor writing and revising skills of students. Time seems to be a problem stated repeatedly by researchers. Many feel that students are not writing enough, and they are not given enough time to work on revising (Atwell, 1987; Calkins, 1986; Zemelman & Daniels, 1988). Although most researchers agree with a workshop type of approach to teaching writing, this poses many problems for them, such as time and structure (Fiderer, 1993). The middle grades especially struggle with time and structure sufficient for a workshop approach to teaching writing. Zemelman and Daniels (1987, p.11) believe, "It is harder to implement the process approach to

writing at the junior-high and high-school level. It calls for more struggle, more work, more upstream swimming by the teacher." These settings are often departmentalized, which means that teachers have less time to work with students, have too great a workload, and do not have time to offer personal connections (Zemelman & Daniels, 1988). In addition, Wiener (1990) observes that junior and senior high schools often focus too much on the literature component of English, and teaching writing becomes far less important. Another problem with a lack of time is that teachers often feel it is impossible to devote enough class time for the writing needs of individual students. According to Behrman (2000, p. vii), "Ideally, every student should master a specific writing technique before going on to the next. In practice, however, this is seldom, if ever, possible in a classroom situation." In the typical junior and senior high school setting, teachers just do not have enough time to help all students individually.

Teachers struggle with creating an environment using the workshop approach for other reasons as well. One reason, especially true in middle grades, is that teachers resist collaborative experiences for their students because they think collaboration is too risky, that students may get distracted, and even disruptive, if given too much freedom to work on their own or with partners (Hyland, 2000; Muschla, 1993; Zemelman & Daniels, 1988). Teachers worry that as they circulate around the room helping individual and small-group members, the other students will stop working. Another problem for teachers using a collaborative approach is that many do not feel that students working together to revise and edit can bring improved results for their papers. Hyland (2000, p. 2) states, "Peer feedback may give students an unrealistic impression of their own abilities, since peer reviewers may want to avoid upsetting other students and therefore

stress the positive aspects of writing, without pointing out the problems." Hyland also states (2000, p. 2), "If the interaction was poor or the writers became defensive, they were less likely to make changes." Research tends to point out, however, that teachers have been ineffective in teaching students how to collaborate productively with each other. Teachers have not always been focused in their approaches to workshops, and have done an inadequate job teaching students how to collaborate effectively. One example of this is when teachers do not work with their students enough on helping them to give and receive constructive criticism (Lillios & Iding, 1996).

On the other hand, some researchers feel that the writing process taught with a workshop approach has been too rigid. Willis' article (1997) suggests that the workshop approach often becomes inflexible and too much like a formula, not allowing for change and flexibility. Teachers often feel that the structure they provide will create a safe environment for students and that writers need safety. This is not true, according to some researchers. Franks (1995), for example, believes that when environments are too safe, students will not take risks, and only with risk-taking can students truly become free to fantasize, be honest, and explore their thoughts for improved writing.

In conclusion, evidence has shown that students have great difficulty when revising and editing their written work. This has been found at the site of the study with both teacher and student surveys, and in the results of the rubrics used to score students' pre-measure writing samples. Literature has shown that a lack of training for teachers in the area of writing has resulted in ineffective teaching in the classroom. As a result of poor instruction and evaluation,

students often do not understand the writing process, and do not know how to revise their work. The lack of student interest for writing has led many teachers to believe that students are not motivated to write and revise well. Many researchers disagree, however, and believe that teachers often do not create an environment conducive for successful writing.

CHAPTER 3

THE SOLUTION STRATEGY

Literature Review

Literature suggests that proper training for teachers in the area of writing is crucial in order to help students become self-directed, successful writers. Because of a major paradigm shift in the last fifteen years from traditional methods of teaching writing to a more process-oriented method, it is evident that teachers need to become properly trained to attempt such an approach in their classrooms. They need to have training in how to teach composition, and need to be made aware of how to use effective teaching strategies that are useful for composing written work. In order to learn these strategies, teachers need to learn the theories underlying them. To provide for such training, efforts need to be made so that instruction for teachers can be improved. College and university faculties need to be responsible for teaching the most effective methods for teaching writing. In addition, local in-service training programs should be provided so that teachers can learn effective strategies for teaching writing, and collaborate planning and the use of those techniques across the writing curriculum. Hillocks (1998) suggests that such in-service opportunities be made available to teachers often, and in various settings, such as summer workshops or release time during the school day.

The most widely suggested approach to teaching composition is through the writing workshop (Calkins, 1986; Hillocks, 1996; Wiener, 1990; Zemelman & Daniels, 1988). According to Zemelman and Daniels (1998), young writer's performances using this approach are superior to those taught in a traditional manner. They believe that this approach is much more effective than the approaches most teachers experienced themselves as students. Hyland (2000) believes that the approach makes clear to students what is expected of them, and helps them develop metacognitive skills not evident in traditional methods of teaching writing. In order to establish a successful writing workshop, however, teachers need to reconsider their understanding of students themselves, look hard at what they have been doing and asking students to do in writing, look for new possibilities in the classroom, reevaluate some traditional elements of their teaching, and change some familiar and even treasured patterns of instruction (Atwell, 1987; Calkins, 1986; Zemelman & Daniels, 1998). These researchers endorse the philosophy that writing is a process to be experienced and learned rather than taught, and this is best done with a writing workshop approach.

Researchers have different opinions about what the exact stages of the process are, yet they agree that they may vary, and are recursive (Calkins, 1996; Fiderer, 1993; Frank, 1995; Graves, 1988; Zemelman & Daniels, 1988). Typically, the stages are as follows: prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing. Literature suggests that it is important for teachers to devote an adequate amount of time to allow for the writing process to be taught. According to Zemelman and Daniels (1988), because the process is holistic, nonmechanistic and inductive large amounts of class time are needed for students to write and be able to respond to writing.

One step intrinsic to the successful teaching of writing in a workshop approach is for teachers to model for their students. This is to be done during all stages of the writing process. Atwell (1987) suggests that teachers need to model the importance and usefulness in their own lives of the subjects they teach. Demonstrating their own processes of writing, teachers can show students the value of writing and develop an insight into their own writing that can help them be more helpful to their students.

There are several ways to model writing in the classroom. One way, for example, is for teachers to write often themselves. Students will observe this, and be more inclined to put forth effort when their teacher is doing it, too (Atwell, 1987; Calkins, 1986; Frank, 1995; Zemelman & Daniels, 1988). Another suggested way to model is to expose students to the writing processes of both classmates and skilled adult writers (Byron, 1998; Zemelman & Daniels, 1988). It is important to model for students the steps for revision, and equally important to help them understand the reasons revision is important. Zemelman and Daniels (1988) suggest that teachers show students that revision is a normal, integral part of the whole writing process. It should not be punitive, and all ideas should be respected. It is also important for students to understand that not every piece needs revision (Frank, 1995; Zemelman & Daniels, 1988).

In addition to modeling, researchers recommend the use of mini-lessons as a part of the writing workshop approach. Mini-lessons are conducted by addressing the whole class at once on one topic for a five to ten minute period. Teachers use this opportunity to introduce students to various type of writing, discuss specific writing techniques, teach basic language skills, and share information about writing in general. The topics addressed in mini-lessons grow out of the

needs of students as the teacher perceives them through observation, and should not be dictated by the curriculum (Atwell, 1987; Fiderer, 1993; Muschla, 1993; Willis, 1997). It is suggested that grammar and mechanics could be addressed in mini-lessons, but should not be isolated. Research shows that these skills are best learned during composition, when meaning and revision are the focus, not after the composition is finished (Atwell, 1987; Behrman, 2000; Calkins, 1996; Willis, 1997; Zemelman & Daniels, 1988).

As well as using mini-lessons during a writing workshop, researchers also suggest the use of conferences, which help to drive the writing process. Students need to talk through what they will write about before they actually sit down to write, and they often require ongoing feedback through different draft stages as they try to make their meaning clear. This can be done through a conference. According to Fiderer (1993), conferring is the main responsibility of the teacher during a workshop. During this time, while the students have access to writing materials and strategies for dealing with writing blocks, the teacher is available for individual or small group needs.

It is suggested that teacher/student conferences be held at least once per week with each child, and that it is set up with a predictable structure (Hyland, 2000; Marchisan & Alber, 2001). This is best accomplished by teachers circulating around the room, going from student to student for brief periods of time (Fiderer, 1993). Teachers must appear approachable and friendly to promote trust, and be nurturing and guiding as they work with their students. Wilcox (1997) suggests that sitting facing one another, particularly across a table or desk may imply an adversarial relationship. He feels it is best for teachers to remain at direct eye level with the

students in a side-by-side position to show support, and to avoid looking down on a child or showing alienation by sitting far away from the child. Wilcox (1997) also recommends that teachers allow the students to read their work aloud, instead of the teacher taking the paper from the student, which may appear as a loss of control for the student. This also allows the children to hear their own voice, reinforcing their sense of ownership. Researchers agree that steps taken such as these are important to help students feel at ease during a conference (Atwell, 1987; Calkins, 1986, Wilcox, 1997; Zemelman & Daniels, 1988).

It is also recommended that teachers only focus on one skill at a time during a conference to discuss revision (Calkins, 1996; Wiener, 1990). Teachers should look for patterns of related errors, and help the child focus on that particular pattern instead of being tempted to mark several surface structure errors (Zemelman & Daniels, 1988). They should also focus more on the process rather than the actual words, and begin by looking first at content, and later on mechanics (Calkins, 1986; Zemelman & Daniels, 1988). The use of checklists is often recommended for both students and teachers to help guide with revision during a conference. They should be simple at the beginning, and expand as students become more proficient. Content should be evaluated first, and clarity and correctness later. It is also important to make sure that checklists show areas of strengths, as well as areas suggesting revision (Burke, 1999; Zemelman & Daniels, 1988).

During a conference, teachers should act as facilitators, helping students to come to their own conclusions about their work, and allowing students to choose what to revise themselves.

This will make revision more meaningful, and will promote a sense of ownership for students (Frank, 1995; Zemelman & Daniels, 1988).

During conferencing, as well as other times, researchers agree that teachers must be aware of how to evaluate students' work effectively. Feedback given to students should be specific and meaningful, and be a combination of praise and criticism. Feedback should begin with praise, and be more prevalent than criticism (Hyland, 2000; Lillios & Iding, 1996; Marchisan & Alber, 2001; Zemelman & Daniels, 1988). Research also suggests that feedback should be continuous throughout the writing process, given while students are writing, not just for a final product (Atwell, 1987). Teachers can offer feedback in a variety of ways, however rubrics and checklists are often suggested because they are specific and meaningful to the student, and can even be used by the student to help guide with self-evaluation (Burke, 1999). To help evaluation be even more specific, Byron (1998) suggests that teachers break their feedback into two parts: essential information, and artistic impression. He feels that this will command attention to detail and motivate students to self-correct more often during the revision stage of the writing process. Whether writing on a rubric or directly on the student's work, researchers advise that teachers avoid using a red pen. Since children often fear the marks of a red pen, it is suggested that pencil or ink of another color is used for evaluation.

Literature also suggests peer conferencing as method of collaboration and offering feedback for students during a writing workshop, especially during the revision stage. Researchers agree that it is very important that students be taught how to do this, and that if enough time and energy are used preparing students for this task, it can work extremely well. It

is important to explain to students that peer editing is a way to help authors see how readers and listeners understand their work, and that their role is to help other writers improve their writing skills (Muschla, 1993). Suggested ways to teach students how to do this effectively are through modeling and role-playing (Calkins, 1996; Hyland, 2000; Zemelman & Daniels, 1988). These strategies work well because students tend to be sensitive and insightful critics of their classmates, and most of all, they enjoy the opportunity to work together and are eager to consult each other in collaborative ways (Marchisan, 2001; Willis, 1997; Zemelman & Daniels, 1988). Students also seem to enjoy the writing guidance that peer revising and editing provide, and this helps keep the writers' attention as they create their written work (Brookens, 2000). Another benefit noted by researchers is that students gain confidence to communicate in working with their peers, and gain a greater understanding of the processes of writing (Calkins, 1996; Hyland, 2000; Zemelman & Daniels, 1988).

Peer revising and editing groups can range in size, but groups of three or four work best. This size allows students to receive more than one opinion, yet does not take up too much class time (Zemelman & Daniels, 1988). The following steps are recommended during peer editing conferences: sit in a quiet area where others will not be disturbed; listen and read along as the author reads; tell what the writing piece was about and what was liked best; read and make notes; ask questions; think about specific suggestions one could make; discuss one's suggestions with the author; keep the conference short-under seven minutes; end the conference by asking the writer what he or she plans to do next (Fiderer, 1993; Marchisan and Alber, 2001, Muschla,

1993). Peer conferencing done at the end of the writing workshop will provide meaningful closure to the day's work.

Finally, many researchers agree that the climate teachers establish in their classrooms is a true predictor of students' success. It is important to build a learning community, therefore teachers should provide an environment that is socially safe and encourages risk-taking (Calkins, 1986; Zemelman & Daniels, 1988). As Calkins (1996) suggests, writing cannot be done if students are afraid to put themselves on the page. Teachers need to offer rich and meaningful experiences in both reading and writing. One way this can be done is by letting students pursue their own interests for writing in a setting that is stable and ongoing in a process-oriented environment, such as a writing workshop. Allowing students to write about what interests them is motivating for them, and students take ownership of their work. Writing matters more to them when it is personal (Calkins, 1986; Frank, 1995; Muschla, 1993; Zemelman & Daniels, 1988). Atwell (1987) believes that educators need to organize the teaching of junior-high students in ways that will allow more student choice. She feels that students will begin to understand and participate more when they are allowed to work on independent activities, have more say in what happens in the classroom, and be able to take more responsibility for their own learning. It is also suggested that the more students become involved, the more their fears will be overcome and self-discovery and cooperation will emerge. Because they have taken control of their own writing, their learning will be more efficient and rewarding (Calkins, 1986; Muschla, 1993; Zemelman & Daniels, 1988).

Another way teachers can make writing more meaningful is by having students write for a real audience. This especially helps in the revision stage of the writing process. Students will take their revision and editi g much more seriously, and continue to work on it, if they know that it will be read by someone other than just the teacher or even fellow students (Calkins, 1986; Muschla, 1993; Willis, 1997; Zemelman & Daniels, 1988).

To create an environment in which students are at ease, teachers need to be more aware of what their students are like, especially in a junior high or middle school setting. Teachers need to understand that confusion, restlessness, preoccupation with peers and questioning of authority figures does not necessarily mean students have a poor attitude. They need to realize that these behaviors are typical responses of adolescents, and be able to work with them through these often difficult times for students. Calkins (1996) stresses that teachers must care, and know that the environment they create deeply affects their teaching.

Another suggestion for helping students feel more at ease during the writing process is for teachers to act as nurturers and facilitators. As students write, teachers should move around among them observing, demonstrating, and giving suggestions on an as-needed basis (Calkins, 1996). They also need to model and set examples, because children often learn by imitation (Wiener, 1990). Teachers should also set up word banks around the room, which will help students write more descriptively. Charts about the process of writing should be displayed for reference (Calkins, 1996; Marchisan & Alber, 2001).

Finally, the environment in which students write should be one that allows a great deal of sharing. This can occur by publishing or displaying work to be read, or even reading orally.

Children enjoy being heard, and having their lives and stories acknowledged and celebrated. Also, knowing that their pieces will be published for others to view, students will take revising and editing more seriously, and writing with correctness will matter to them (Calkins, 1986; Zemelman & Daniels, 1988). Sharing and publishing can also provide closure, which is why many researchers suggest that it be done each day at the end of the writing period (Calkins, 1996; Fiderer, 1993; Muschla, 1993).

In conclusion, students will become better writers and revisers when teachers receive more training in the area of teaching writing. Research has shown that using a writing workshop approach is most beneficial process for students, and should include modeling, mini-lessons, conferencing and peer editing. In addition, teachers should be made more aware of improved methods for evaluating students' writing, and in creating an environment that will encourage students, particularly in the upper grades, to write more successfully.

Project Objectives and Processes

As a result of the use of teacher/student conferencing, during the period of September 2001 to November 2001, the targeted sixth grade class will increase revision skills as measured by a student survey and two teacher-designed rubrics.

In order to accomplish this project objective, the following processes are necessary:

1. Professional literature on conferencing will be reviewed.
2. Checklists and question prompts that coach revision skills will be developed.
3. Guidelines and expectations for the writing workshop will be addressed through mini-lessons by the teacher/researcher.

4. A curricular unit reflecting revision skills will be constructed by the teacher/researcher.
5. Guidelines and expectations for students during conference time will be addressed by the teacher/researcher.
6. Modeling of revising and editing skills will be demonstrated by the teacher/researcher.
7. Feedback will be given to students that is specific, focusing on one skill at a time.
8. The teacher/researcher will act as facilitator during writing workshops.

In addition, as a result of peer editing, during the period of September 2001 to November 2001, the targeted sixth grade class will increase their revision skills, as measured by a student survey and two teacher-designed rubrics.

In order to accomplish this project objective, the following processes are necessary:

1. Professional literature on peer editing will be reviewed.
2. A peer editing guide fostering revision skills will be developed by the researcher.
3. Lessons reflecting revision skills will be constructed.
4. A series of mini-lessons that address peer editing will be developed.
5. Peer editing sessions will be modeled by the teacher/researcher.
6. The teacher/researcher will act as a facilitator during peer editing sessions.
7. The teacher/researcher will promote an environment that is socially safe and encourages risk-taking.

Project Action Plan

The following action plan is designed to improve teacher writing instruction and increase student revising skills. The plan begins with the researcher reviewing and collecting materials about revision in the months of February through June. In July and August, researchers will develop materials such as peer editing forms, teacher and student surveys, a narrative writing rubric, and a mechanics rubric. The teacher survey will be administered during the last week of August and collected the first week of September. The student survey will be administered to two sixth grade classes during the first week of September. This survey will be read aloud by the teacher. Also in August, a writing prompt for a personal narrative will be created by the teacher and given to the students of the two sixth grade classes in September. The teacher will read the prompt aloud, and give students a written copy. The researcher will then evaluate the narratives using the two rubrics created earlier. During the months of August through November, mini-lessons on writing workshop procedures will be developed. Researchers will re-read books and articles that were collected earlier, and plan workshop mini-lessons. These lessons will be implemented twice a week from the first week of September to the first week of December. The researcher will model and coach students through the writing process. One of these lessons will include an introduction to teacher/student writing conferences.

After this introduction, the researcher will model a writing conference for the two sixth grade classes, as students observe. This will occur two days during the second week of September. The researcher will conference with three to five students daily from the second week of September through the first week of December. In late September, the researcher will review books and articles on peer editing, and develop an introductory lesson to be given to

students on two days during the first week of October. During this lesson the researcher will show students the peer editing form created earlier and model an editing session. Next, the researcher will conduct a class peer editing session. From the first week of October through the first week of December students will participate in peer editing sessions for ten minutes daily. During this time the researcher will observe and monitor their progress using the peer editing forms and writing samples.

In November a personal narrative prompt will be developed, and then administered in early December. When given to the students, the researcher will read the prompt aloud, and provide each student from the two sixth grade classes a written copy of the prompt. The researcher will then use the two rubrics created earlier to evaluate the personal narratives. During the first week of December, students will also be given the same writing survey they had taken in September. The researcher will read this aloud to the two sixth grade classes. Finally, during the month of December, the researcher will collect student data from rubrics and then analyze this data.

Methods of Assessment

In order to assess the effects of the intervention, a survey will be developed and given to fellow teachers the first week of school regarding students' revising skills. In addition, a student attitude survey about writing and revising will be developed and administered to students the first week of school and again during the first week of December. Two teacher created rubrics will be made, one to measure mechanics and one to measure content of a narrative students will

write after viewing the writing prompt. The rubrics will be used as a pre-measure in the beginning of September, and again as a post-measure the first week of December.

In conclusion, literature suggests that the writing workshop approach to teaching writing is more beneficial than a traditional approach. When using a writing workshop, it is important for teachers to use the modeling, mini-lessons, teacher/student conferences, and peer editing as routine elements of the workshop. In response to such literature, the teacher/researcher will use teacher/student conferencing and peer editing as an intervention to improve students' revising and editing skills.

CHAPTER 4

PROJECT RESULTS

Historical Description of the Intervention

The objective of this project was to increase the revision and editing skills of sixth grade students through the implementation of teacher/student writing conferencing and peer editing during the period of September 2001 to December 2001. Before the interventions, the students' revision and editing skills were measured with a teacher survey, student attitude survey, and a writing sample.

The researcher began in June 2001, reviewing and collecting materials on conferencing and peer editing. From July through August 2001, the researcher created a peer editing form, a teacher survey, a student survey, a student skills checklist to be used during conferencing, and two rubrics, one to measure content and one to measure mechanics.

The teacher survey was distributed the last week of August, and was collected by the researcher the first week of September. The students' surveys were administered and collected during the first week of September. Also during the first week of September, the researcher administered the narrative prompt to the students. The writing samples were then collected and evaluated by the researcher using the two rubrics. These rubrics were analyzed to determine baseline data of the study.

The interventions began with the implementation of writers' workshop. The researcher modeled teacher/student conferencing in the middle of September; conferencing was conducted from late September to December 2001 for 10 to 30 minutes daily, as shown in lesson plans (Appendix C). The original plan suggested that the teacher/researcher conference with three to five students daily. Because of the time constraints experienced by the teacher/researcher, conferencing was usually limited to two to four students per day.

During the second week of October, the researcher introduced and modeled peer editing, as shown in lesson plans (Appendix C). Original plans called for daily peer editing sessions to begin the first week of October. In addition, the plan called for 10 minutes of each class period in which students would share and edit their writing in pairs or small groups. Two weeks into the intervention, the number of peer editing sessions was reduced from five to two days a week for 20 minutes. This was a necessary change due to the lack of instructional time in the daily schedule. In addition, the researcher discovered that the 10-minute peer editing session was an insufficient amount of time for students to share and edit their peers' work, and students were rushing though their assigned tasks. Consequently, the time was doubled to create 20-minute peer editing sessions, which provided a longer amount of time for students to give quality feedback.

Due to the many interruptions in the daily schedule during the month of December, the final narrative prompt was administered the first week planned, but not collected until the third week of December to allow students adequate time to conference with the teacher/researcher and peer edit with partners or in small groups. Because more class time was

spent on the narrative writing than the action plan stated, the student survey was administered during the second week of December, one week later than originally planned. Results were also compiled and analyzed one week later than planned, during the third week in December instead of the second week.

In conclusion, peer editing and teacher/student conferencing was implemented from September 2001 to December 2001. Baseline data of the students' revision and editing skills were obtained with a teacher survey, student survey, and two writing rubrics-- a mechanics and content rubric. The September implementation of teacher/student conferencing and the October implementation of peer editing followed the original action plan found in chapter 3. However, conference time rarely included more than three students per day, and peer-editing sessions were reduced from five days to two days a week, due to the lack of instructional time. The 10-minute sessions were doubled to 20 minutes to provide for more quality feedback. The post narrative prompt and the student attitude survey were administered in December. The teacher/researcher collected post data by assessing student narrative writing samples with the same mechanics and content rubrics.

Presentation and Analysis of Results

The post student attitude survey, the post content rubric, and the post mechanics rubric results were analyzed by the teacher/researcher. Comparisons were made with the pre and post student survey results, pre and post content rubric results, and pre and post mechanics rubric results.

The first instrument, a student attitude survey (Appendix A), was administered by the teacher/researcher to the targeted 50 sixth grade students during the third week of December, after the four month implementation of peer editing and teacher/student conferencing. The student survey contained the same six questions as the survey administered in September. The answers to three specific questions were compiled in Figures 10, 11, and 12. The first question asked students to indicate on which phase of the writing process they spent the most time; the data were compiled in Figure 10. In Figure 11 students stated the phase of the writing process that was the most challenging and in Figure 12 students indicated the phase of the writing process that was the easiest for them.

Figure 10. Student attitude post survey responses to the phase of writing process on which students spend the most time.

Figure 10 shows the results of the post student attitude post survey on the writing process in which students spend the most time. Eleven percent of the students stated that they spent the most time on prewriting and 26% stated that they spent the most time on drafting. Twenty-six percent of students felt they spent the most time on revising, 17% stated editing, and 20% indicated publishing as the phase of the writing process they spent the most time.

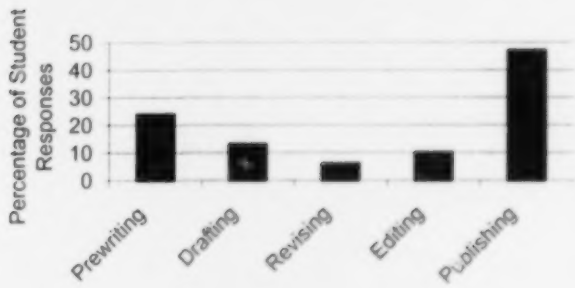

Figure 11. Student attitude post survey responses to the phase of the writing process that is the easiest for them.

Figure 11 displays the results of the post student attitude post survey on the writing process that is the easiest for students. Twenty-four percent of students believed prewriting to be the easiest phase of the writing process, while 13% of students felt drafting was the easiest. In the survey, six percent of students felt revising was the easiest phase and 10% stated editing. Forty-seven percent of students stated that publishing was the easiest phase of the writing process.

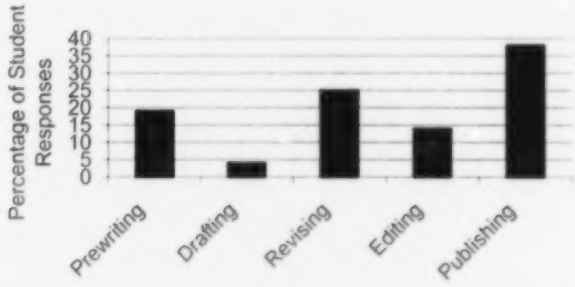

Figure 12. Student responses to the phase of the writing process that gives them the most trouble.

Figure 12 shows the results of the student attitude survey on the writing process phase that causes students the most trouble. Nineteen percent of students stated that prewriting was the

most challenging, while four percent felt drafting was the most difficult. For revising and editing, 25% of students stated that revising was the most difficult and 14% felt editing was the most challenging. Thirty-eight percent of students stated publishing as being the most challenging.

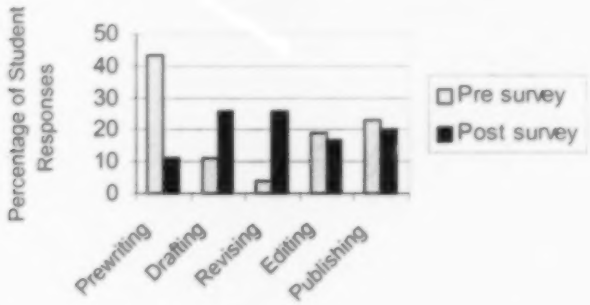

Figure 13. Pre and post results of student attitude survey showing the phase of the writing process on which students spend the most time.

Figure 13 displays the pre and post results of the student attitude survey on which students spend the most time. When comparing September's student attitude survey results to December's student attitude survey results, there are some significant differences in student responses. In September 43% of students felt they spent the most time on prewriting, and in December only 11% of students felt they spent the most time on prewriting. In addition only 11% of students in September stated they spent the most time on drafting, and after the four-month study, 26% of students stated that drafting is the phase of the writing process on which they spend the most time. For revising and editing, 27% of students in September felt they spent the most time on these phases of the writing process. However, in December, 43% of students felt that revising and editing were the phases of the writing process on which they spent the most

time. The student results indicating that they spend the most time on publishing were similar for the pre and post surveys; 23% stated publishing in Septen ber and 20% in December.

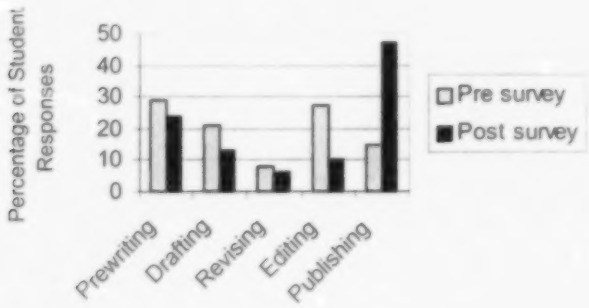

Figure 14. Pre and post results of student attitude survey showing the phase of the writing process that is the easiest for students.

Figure 14 shows the results of the pre and post student attitude survey results for the phase of the writing process that was the easiest for students. Before the implementation of the two revision and editing strategies, 29% of the students believed that prewriting was the easiest phase. After the four-month study, 24% of students felt prewriting was the easiest phase of the writing process. In September 21% of students felt drafting was the easiest phase. However, only 13% of students stated that drafting was the easiest phase in December. For the pre survey results, 35% of students believed that revising and editing was the easiest phase of the writing process, while in December for the post survey, only 16% felt that revising and editing was the easiest. Significantly, 47% of students indicated that that publishing was the easiest phase of the writing process after the four-month study, while only 15% stated that publishing was the easiest in September.

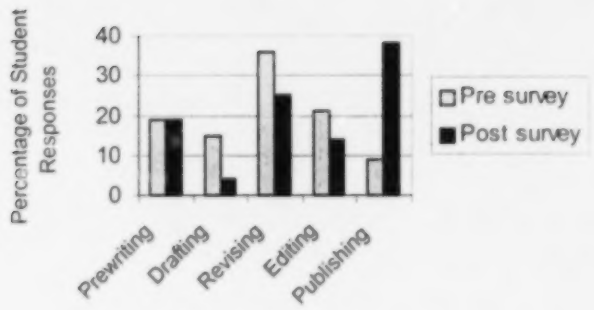

Figure 15. Pre and post results of student attitude survey showing the phase of the writing process that gives students the most trouble.

Figure 15 represents the pre and post results of the student attitude survey that is the most challenging for students. For both the pre and post surveys, 19% of students felt prewriting was the most difficult. In September, 15% of students stated that drafting was the most challenging, while in December only four percent felt drafting caused them the most trouble. For revising and editing, 57% of students felt these two phases were the most difficult in September. In December, 39% of students stated that revising and editing were the most difficult phases. Nine percent of students stated that publishing was the most challenging in September, while in December, 38% of students stated that publishing gave them the most trouble.

During the first week of December, the teacher/researcher administered the second instrument, a narrative writing prompt (Appendix B), to 50 sixth grade students. The narrative writing prompt asked students to describe an unforgettable school day. The completed writing samples were used to determine post data on student revising skills. The students' narrative writing samples were evaluated with the same two rubrics as the prewriting samples from September, a content rubric and a mechanics rubric. The revision skills evaluated in both rubrics

were taken from the district's sixth grade language arts curriculum, which aligns with the state language arts standards.

The content rubric for narrative writing (Appendix A) measured five aspects of revision: a) focus, b) clarity, c) organization, d) support, and e) imagery. These five areas were evaluated with a four-point rubric; four points represent student mastery of the skill and three or fewer points indicate that the skill is not mastered.

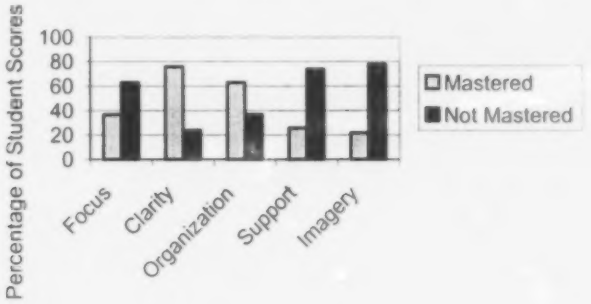

Figure 16. Results of the post writing rubric showing student content writing skills.

Figure 16 displays the results of the content writing rubric from the students' second narrative sample. Thirty-seven percent of students mastered the use of focus when writing a narrative, while 63% of students did not master it. In regard to the skill of clarity, 76% of students demonstrated mastery and 24% did not demonstrate mastery. Sixty-three percent of students demonstrated mastery in the organization of their writing, and 37% did not demonstrate mastery. In the area of using support, 26% of students demonstrated mastery and 74% did not master the use of support. Twenty-two percent of students demonstrated mastery in the use of imagery, and 78% did not demonstrate mastery.

An average of 45% of the students demonstrated mastery in the content skills of focus, clarity, organization, support, and imagery. Fifty-five percent of students did not demonstrate mastery in the five categories.

The mechanics rubric for narrative writing (Appendix A) measures revision and editing skills in five categories: a) focus, b) clarity, c) organization, d) support, and e) sentence structure. Each skill category was evaluated based on a four-point rubric; four points represented student mastery of the skill and three or fewer points indicated that the skill was not mastered.

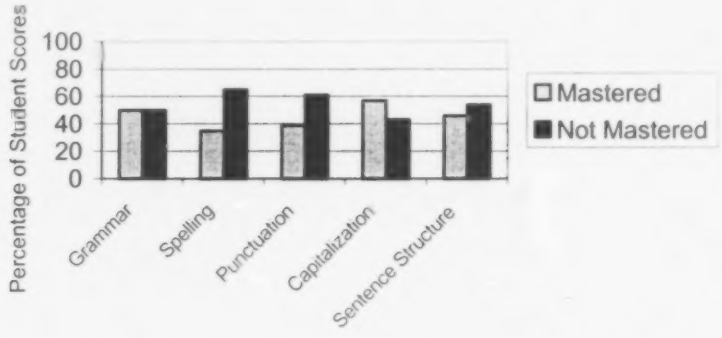

Figure 17. Results of the post writing rubric showing student skills in mechanics.

Figure 17 shows the results of the mechanics rubric from the students' second narrative writing sample. When using mechanics, 50% of students demonstrated mastery in the area of grammar and 50% did not demonstrate mastery. Thirty-five percent of students demonstrated mastery in the area of spelling while 65% did not demonstrate mastery. When using punctuation, 39% of students demonstrated mastery and 61% of students did not master punctuation. Fifty-seven percent of students demonstrated mastery in capitalization and 43% did not demonstrate mastery after the four-month study. Finally, 46% of students demonstrated mastery in sentence structure while 54% did not master editing for appropriate sentence structure.

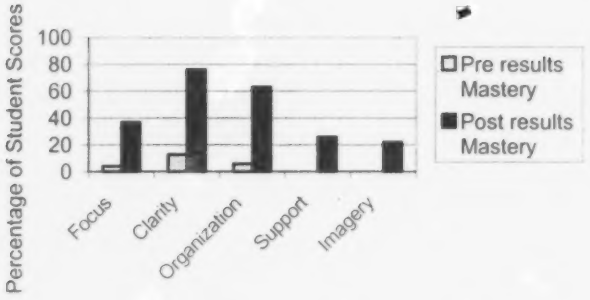

Figure 18. Pre and post results of rubric showing student skills in content.

Figure 18 displays the results of the pre and post rubrics used to assess student content skill level in the areas of focus, clarity, organization, support, and imagery. In September, only four percent of students demonstrated mastery in the use of focus while in December 37% of students demonstrated mastery. For the prewriting sample, 13 percent of students demonstrated mastery in clarity. After the four-month study, 76% of students showed mastery in editing for clarity. For organization in their writing six percent of students demonstrated mastery in the narrative prewriting narrative and 63% percent of students demonstrated mastery on the post narrative. In September, no students mastered the use of support and imagery in their writing. After implementing a writers' workshop and the two revising and editing strategies, 26% of students mastered support and 22% of students mastered the use of imagery in their writing.

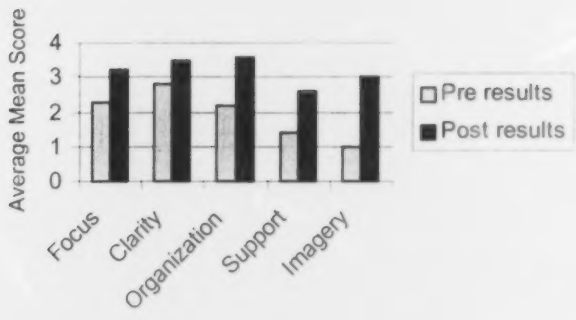

Figure 19. Pre and post results of the rubric showing mean scores in the area of content.

Figure 19 displays the average mean scores for the content areas of focus, clarity, organization, support and imagery. The scores are based on a rubric with a maximum score for each content area of 4. In September, the average mean score for focus was 2.3, while the mean score in December was 3.2. The area of clarity showed a September mean average of 2.8 and an average mean score of 3.5 in December. The mean score for organization was 2.2 in September and 3.6 in December. The area of support in September showed a mean score of 1.4 while in December it showed an average of 2.6. Imagery mean scores showed growth with an average of 1.0 in September and 3.0 after the four-month study in December.

When comparing the pre and post rubric results of student content writing, there was an average increase of 40% in the mastery of content writing skills after the four-month study. From September to December, student writing improved in the area of focus, with an increase of 33% mastery. There was a 63% increase in student mastery of clarity and a 57% increase in the mastery of organization in student writing. In the content areas of support and imagery, there was a 26% increase in student mastery of support and a 22% increase in the mastery of imagery.

After the four-month study, an average of 45% of students demonstrated mastery in all five content writing skills, while in September an average of only five percent of students demonstrated mastery. When specifically examining focus, support, and use of imagery, only 28% of the targeted sixth grade students demonstrated mastery and 72% did not demonstrate mastery. However, 70% of students demonstrated mastery in the content areas of clarity and organization, while only 26% did not demonstrate mastery.

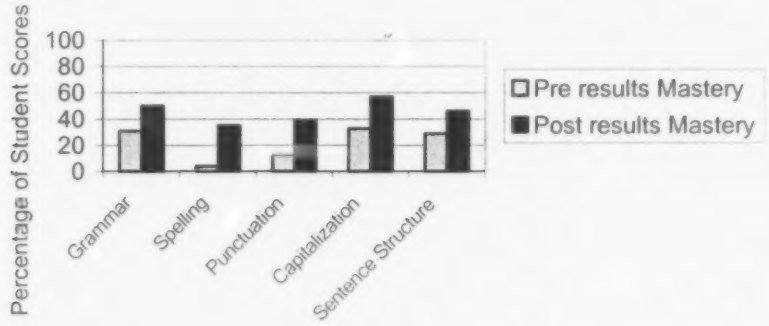

Figure 20. Pre and post results of the rubric showing student skills in mechanics.

Figure 20 displays the pre and post results of the narrative rubric, which assessed student skill level in mechanics during September and December. When examining grammar skills, 31% of students demonstrated mastery in September and 50% demonstrated mastery in December. Four percent of students demonstrated mastery in spelling on the prewriting sample, while 35% demonstrated mastery in spelling for the post results. When using punctuation, 13% of students mastered using punctuation skills during September. In December 39% of students mastered the use of punctuation. Thirty-three percent of students demonstrated mastery in the area of capitalization in September while in December 57% of students demonstrated mastery. For using accurate sentence structure, 29% of students demonstrated mastery on the prewriting narrative and 46% of students demonstrated mastery on the post writing narrative sample.

When comparing the pre and post rubric results of student mechanics writing, there was an average increase of 23% in the mastery of mechanics writing skills after the four-month study. There was a 19% increase in the mastery of grammar skills from the pre and the post rubric results. When examining spelling, there was a 31% increase in the mastery of spelling skills. In the area of punctuation skills, there was an increase of 26% in the mastery of student punctuation skills. There was a 24% increase in student mastery of capitalization skills from September to December. Finally, there was an increase of 17% in student mastery of appropriate sentence structure from the pre and the post rubric results.

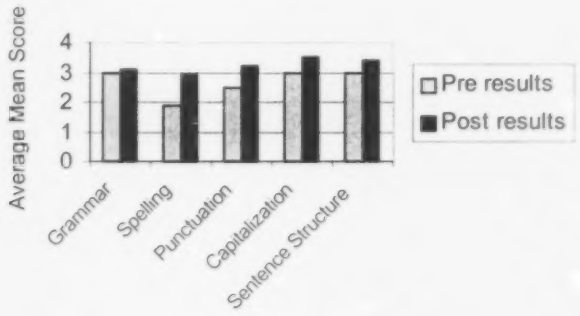

Figure 21. Pre and post results of the rubric showing mean scores in the area of mechanics.

Figure 21 displays the average mean scores for the areas of mechanics including grammar, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and sentence structure. The scores are based on a rubric with a maximum score for each content area of 4. In September the average mean score for grammar was 3.0 while in December it was 3.1. The area of spelling showed a September mean average of 1.9 and an average mean score of 2.9 in December. The mean score for punctuation was 2.5 in September and 3.2 in December. The area of capitalization showed a mean score of 3.0 in September while in December it showed an average of 3.5. Sentence structure mean scores showed an average of 3.0 in September and 3.4 in December.

After the four-month study, an average of 45% of students demonstrated mastery in grammar, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and sentence structure. In September, an average of only 22% of students had demonstrated mastery in all five categories.

When examining the post results of the mechanics rubrics, many students received a three or near mastery in the areas of grammar, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and sentence structure. Thirty-nine percent of students demonstrated near mastery in grammar. Thus, 89% of students demonstrated mastery or near mastery in grammar. For spelling, 30% of students demonstrated near mastery, and therefore, 65% of students demonstrated mastery or near mastery in the area of spelling. When using punctuation, 35% of students demonstrated near mastery in the post results. Thus, 74% of students demonstrated mastery or near mastery in December. When examining capitalization and sentence structure, 35% of students demonstrated near mastery in capitalization and 46% demonstrated near mastery in sentence structure. Ninety-two percent of students demonstrated mastery or near mastery in the areas of capitalization and sentence structure.

In conclusion, the results of the pre and post student attitude survey, the pre and post content rubric, and the pre and post mechanics rubric provided the teacher/researcher with data that demonstrated student growth in revising and editing skills. The student attitude survey revealed an improved student understanding in the importance of revising and editing skills. When examining the data from the student attitude survey, in September 43% of students believed that they spent the most time on prewriting, while only 23% spent the most time on revising and editing. After implementing writers' workshop, teacher/student conferencing, and peer editing, only 11% of students stated that they spent the most time on prewriting, and 43%

stated that they spent the most time on revising and editing. For the pre results from the student attitude survey indicating the phase of the writing process that students feel is the easiest, 35% of the students believed revising and editing was the easiest. In December, only 16% of students stated that revising and editing was the easiest. When examining the phase of the writing process that gives students the most trouble, 57% of students felt that revising and editing was the most difficult in the pre survey results and 39% of students stated that revising and editing was the most difficult on the post survey.

After the four-month study, student revising and editing skills level increased in the areas of content and mechanics. There was an average increase of 40% in the mastery of content writing skills and an average increase of 23% in the mastery of mechanics writing skills from September to December. When examining pre and post content rubric data, there was a 33% increase in the mastery of focus, a 63% increase in clarity, a 57% increase in the mastery of organization, a 26% increase in support, and a 22% increase in the mastery of imagery. For the pre and post mechanics rubric data, there was a 19% increase in the mastery of grammar skills, a 33% increase in spelling skills, a 26% increase in punctuation skills, a 24% increase in capitalization skills, and a 17% increase in the appropriate use of sentence structure.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the presentation and analysis of the data on improving student performance in the areas of revising and editing, the students' achievement scores on rubrics evaluating both content and mechanics showed significant improvement through the use of teacher/student conferencing and peer editing. Overall, the students showed a 40% increase in mastery in the

area of content skills. In the area of mechanics a 23% increase was shown. These statistics show tremendous improvement in the students' writing skills through the use of both interventions.

When examining the change in the students' attitudes, the attitude survey (Appendix A) post results showed that most students still felt revising was the most difficult phase of the writing process (see figure 14). When students were asked what phase of the writing process gave them the most trouble results showed a significant decrease over the four-month period of the study. Fifty-seven percent students felt that revising and editing were the most difficult phases in September, but only 39% of students stated these phases to be the most difficult in December. In addition, this study has shown that after the interventions of conferencing and peer editing, students did spend more time on revising and editing (see figure 13), and thus have shown significant improvement in their overall writing. Consequently, significant changes in attitudes did occur as a result of this study.

The researcher, therefore, recommends the use of teacher/student conferencing. During this study, the researcher reduced the suggested number of conferences per day to two to four students, keeping conference times to five minutes or less. To ensure success, it is recommended that modeling be used to demonstrate the procedures and expectations, and that modeling continue until conferencing runs smoothly in the classroom. A second recommendation is that the teacher moves around the room to meet with students at their desks for the conference sessions, rather than meeting at a back table. This suggestion is made in order for the teacher to appear more friendly, nurturing and approachable. It is also recommended that the teacher only focus on one skill at a time during a conference. This allows the teacher to be able to look for related errors, and helps the students focus on particular patterns of errors in their writing. In

addition, meeting times should be limited to five minutes or less. During conference sessions, it is also recommended that the teacher provide meaningful feedback continuously throughout the entire writing process, including the revising and editing stages. This feedback, given orally and through the use of rubrics and checklists provides students with useful information that helps them understand their strengths and weaknesses. This understanding helps lead to overall writing improvement.

The researcher also recommends the use of peer editing and believes that this collaboration helps students improve their revising and editing skills. It is again recommended that this intervention be modeled for students to give them an understanding of the teacher's expectations. A second recommendation is that teachers provide their students with a peer editing guide (Appendix C) to help them provide meaningful feedback for their partner(s). A third recommendation is that the teacher constantly monitor the peer editing sessions, providing praise, support and guidance where needed. It may even be necessary to join certain groups if students are not remaining on task, or are having trouble providing meaningful feedback to their partner(s). Peer editing sessions were originally planned to occur each day for ten minutes, however the researcher found that two to three times per week for 20 minutes was more reasonable.

In conclusion, the researcher believes that teacher/student conferencing and peer editing can make a positive difference in students' revising and editing skills, and their attitudes about the writing process.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Teacher survey
Student Survey
Narrative Writing Rubric
Mechanics Writing Rubric
Baseline Writing Prompt

Teacher Survey of Student Writing Skills

Grade Level _____

Directions: Please circle the answer that best fits each question.

1. Which phase(s) of the writing process do you feel is the most difficult for students?

   Prewriting **Drafting** **Revising** **Editing** **Publishing**

2. For the following categories, decide how proficient students are with those skills.

Capitalization:
mastered usually accurate rarely accurate not present

Spelling:
mastered usually accurate rarely accurate not present

Punctuation:
mastered usually accurate rarely accurate not present

Focus/clarity:
mastered usually accurate rarely accurate not present

Providing support:
mastered usually accurate rarely accurate not present

Organization:
mastered usually accurate rarely accurate not present

Using imagery:
mastered usually accurate rarely accurate not present

Writing Skills Student Attitude Survey

_____

(name)

The five phases of the writing process are:

prewriting drafting revision editing publishing

1. For letters A-E, circle the number of the statement that best fits your understanding of the writing process, and fill in any necessary blanks.

A. I understand what is expected of each phase listed above.

B. I understand what is expected of *all the phases about except for one*, which is _____.

C. I understand what is expected *of all the phases but the following two:*

_____ and _____.

D. I understand what is expected of *all the phases but the following three:*

_____ and _____ and

_____.

E. I do not understand what is expected from any of the phases listed above.

For questions 2-6, circle the writing phase that fits you best.

2. The phase of the writing process that I most enjoy is:

prewriting drafting revision editing publishing

3. The phase of the writing process that I spend the most time on is:

prewriting drafting revision editing publishing

4. The phase of the writing process that I feel is most important is:

prewriting drafting revision editing publishing

5. The phase of the writing process that gives me the most trouble is:

prewriting drafting revision editing publishing

6. The phase of the writing process that is the easiest for me is:

prewriting drafting revision editing publishing

Narrative Writing Rubric

Name _____ ____/22 Points
Date _____

	1	2	3	4
Focus	The subject is unclear throughout the piece of writing. The writing lacks a closing or resolution.	The subject is somewhat clear throughout the piece of writing. The writing may lack a closing or resolution.	The subject is clear throughout the piece of writing. The writing has a closing or resolution.	The subject is very clear throughout the piece of writing. The writing has an effective closing or resolution.
Clarity	Most sentences are unclear.	Some sentences are unclear.	Most sentences are clear and sensible.	All sentences are very clear and sensible.
Organization	The writing contains many gaps in sequence as it moves from beginning, middle, and end. The major events may or may not be in paragraphs. The writing contains no transitions.	The writing contains gaps in sequence as it moves from beginning, middle, and end. The major events are in paragraphs, but contain few or no transitions.	The writing sequence moves with a beginning, middle, and end. The major events are paragraphed and contain some transitions.	The writing sequence moves fluidly from beginning, middle, and end. The major events are appropriately paragraphed and flow as a result of transitions.
Support	Major events and reactions are not supported by a specific detail.	A few major events and reactions are supported by a specific detail.	Most major events and reactions are supported by a specific detail.	All major events and reactions are supported by more than one specific detail.

	1	2	3	4
Imagery	The writing lacks interesting nouns, verbs, and adjectives. The writing lacks metaphors, similes, etc.	Some word choices add to the description. The writing includes a few interesting nouns, verbs, and adjectives. The writing includes one metaphor, simile, etc.	Some word choices enhance the description. The writing includes some interesting nouns, verbs, and adjectives. The writing includes a few metaphors, similes, etc.	Careful word choices enhance the description. The writing includes interesting nouns, verbs, and adjectives. The writing includes metaphors, similes, etc.
Point of View	The piece of writing lacks a consistent voice throughout. There may be confusing tense shifts and pronoun usage.	The piece of writing has a consistent voice from beginning, middle, and end.		

Total Points _____/22

Mechanics Story Rubric

Name _____ Total Points = ____/20 = ____%

Criteria	Goal for Improvement (The editing skill is not demonstrated.) 1	Goal for Improvement (The editing skill is inconsistently used.) 2	Demonstrated Competence (The editing skill is consistently used.) 3	Demonstrated Mastery (The editing skill is mastered.) 4
Grammar	7 or more errors per page	3 to 6 errors per page	1 to 2 errors per page	No errors or no more than two errors for the entire story
Spelling	7 or more errors per page	3 to 6 errors per page	1 to 2 errors per page	No errors or no more than two errors for the entire story
Punctuation	7 or more errors per page	3 to 6 errors per page	1 to 2 errors per page	No errors or no more than two errors for the entire story
Capitalization	7 or more errors per page	3 to 6 errors per page	1 to 2 errors per page	No errors or no more than two errors for the entire story
Sentence Structure	7 or more errors per page	3 to 6 errors per page	1 to 2 errors per page	No errors or no more than two errors

Writing Prompt

Think about an unforgettable or special trip you have been on. It could have been a trip to a zoo, to a museum, or a class field trip. It may be a trip you took to another state. The important thing is that the trip was unforgettable or special to you. You should:

1. Choose to write about one unforgettable or special trip.
2. Be sure to give specific details about the trip, what happened, who was with you, and how you felt during and after the trip.
3. Do not write about an imaginary trip. Tell about an actual trip you took.

Appendix B

Post Writing Prompt

Narrative Writing Prompt

Think about an unforgettable day at school. This unforgettable day could have been as recent as last week or could have occurred as long ago as kindergarten. The important thing is that the day was unforgettable or special to you.

1. Choose to write about one unforgettable school day.
2. Use the space below to play your story. Then, begin drafting.
3. Be sure to give specific details about the day. Describe what happened, who was with you, and how you felt.
4. Retell about an event or events that actually happened to you.

Appendix C

Lesson Plans
Peer Editing Guide
Conferencing Checklist

Lesson Plan for Writing Workshop

Conferencing Intervention

Week One Objective:

Students will learn and understand teacher/student conferencing procedures within a writing workshop setting.

Activities:

1) Discuss purpose of teacher/student conferencing
2) State rules and explain the procedures for teacher/student conferencing and writing workshop
3) Model conferencing procedures with a student in front of entire class
4) Explain checklist that will be used by the teacher during conferencing for anecdotal record keeping of student skills
5) Review rules and procedures for writing workshop

Weeks Two Through Fifteen Objective:

Students will participate in teacher/student conferencing within a writing workshop setting.

Activities:

1) Review rules and procedures for conferencing as needed
2) Conduct mini-lesson on one revising and editing skill daily (five to ten minutes)
3) Conference with 3-5 students daily for five minutes or less

Lesson Plan for Writing Workshop

Peer Editing Intervention

Week Five Objective:

Students will learn and understand peer editing procedures within a writing workshop setting.

Activities:

1) Discuss purpose of peer editing
2) State rules and explain the procedures for peer editing and writing workshop
3) Explain peer editing guide
4) Model peer editing procedures with a student in front of entire class using peer editing guide
5) Assign partners and practice editing for 20 minutes on last two days of week

Weeks Six Through Fifteen Objective:

Students will participate in peer editing within a writing workshop setting.

Activities:

1) Review rules and procedures for peer editing as needed
2) Conduct mini-lesson on one revising and editing skill daily (five to ten minutes)
3) Students will peer edit with a partner twice a week for 20 minutes

Peer Editing Form

Author/Writer_____
Peer Editor(s) _____
Name/Type of Writing_____
_____

1. My favorite part of this writing was_____

   _____

2. Something I would like to see more details about is

   _____

   _____

3. Paragraph breaks are:

   _____in sensible places

   _____need to be changed to where I have marked a "P"

4. Your details:

   _____are specific, descriptive, and support the main idea

   _____need to be more specific and descriptive. Try using interesting verbs, adjective and adverbs. (For example, perhaps use the word _____ instead of _____).

Revision Skills Checklist

Writing checklist for_____

Skills	Mastered skill	Usually accurate	Rarely accurate	Not present
Mechanics/Grammar				
Capitalization				
Spelling				
Punctuation:				
commas				
apostrophes				
quotations/dialogue				
run-on sentences				
fragmented sentences				
Writing				
Focus (Did you stay on the topic?)				
Support (Did you use details and examples?)				
Organization of sentences and paragraphs (Are they in the right order?)				
Imagery (Does it appeal to the senses: see, touch, feel, taste, smell?)				
Clarity (Does it make sense?)				
Point of view (Who is telling the story?				